

4-5-2018

## The Observer

Central Washington University

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## An Easter Extravaganza



Xander Fu / The Observer

The Ellensburg dog biscuit hunt is a decade-old event that allows dogs and their owners the opportunity to mingle before Easter.

**By Henry Crumblish**  
Scene Editor

Egg hunts are commonplace during Easter weekend in Kittitas Valley for children but on Friday March 30, Rotary Park hosted a hunt with a focus on the furry, four-legged residents of Ellensburg.

The dog biscuit hunt has been a local Easter event for over a decade, according to Jodi Hoc-

tor, aquatic and recreation supervisor for the City of Ellensburg.

Hocctor said the dog biscuit hunt is “an opportunity for folks to include another family member, [because] often time people consider their pets their family members.”

This year is the second time the annual event has taken place at the off-leash dog park.

The location change has allowed the event to flourish and lets the

dogs celebrate the holiday with their humans uninhibited.

Laura Landon brought her Great Dane, Bella to the park.

Landon has been attending the dog biscuit hunt with Bella for 10 years and before that attended the event with her previous dogs.

“It’s an opportunity for dogs to have socialization,” Landon said. “The off-leash park is very new and before that it was really one of the

only times you could guarantee that dogs would have an opportunity for socialization.”

The event is focused on the dogs but the hunt also provides owners an opportunity to socialize as well.

“It’s really good to network in case you need someone to watch your dog,” Jhanek Szypulski said.

- See “Easter” page 9

## Recreation expansion makes headway

**By Hanson Lee**  
Sports Editor

Phase one of the Wildcat Commons Project is currently underway. This project involves numerous renovations to CWU’s Tomlinson Stadium, as well as a recreation expansion which will involve the installment of a brand new NCAA track and field venue.

Renovations for Tomlinson Stadium will include a brand new synthetic turf football field, LED stadium lighting, an alumni plaza, renovated restrooms, a brand new three-window ticket booth

area, upgrades to the north ticket booth, a renovated gateway entrance, south wildcat plaza which will serve as cwu football’s entrance for home games, and upgraded fencing.

The recreation expansion will take place on a separate field across the street from Tomlinson Stadium over near the southeast corner of Wildcat Way and 18th and will include the construction of a brand new NCAA regulated track and field venue.

- See “Remodel” page 10



Digital Rendering courtesy of Scott Carlson

The new track and field will mark the beginning of a massive construction overhaul north of the Psychology Building.

## Construction company donates quarter million to name Science II

**By Nicholas Tucker**  
Staff Reporter

Lydig construction announced a \$250,000 donation to the Central Washington University foundation on Monday, March 19. Lydig Construction, a general contractor and construction management company headquartered in Spokane, has constructed many of the buildings that make up the Ellensburg campus.

A few of these buildings include Black Hall, the McIntyre Music Building, the SURC and Science II. Lydig also is currently a part of the Samuelson STEM Center project.

The donation is split into two parts, with \$50,000 going towards the Lydig Endowment, which supports students in CWU’s Construction Management and Safety and Health Management Programs. The program graduates an average of 32 students each year and, according to CEO of Lydig Construction Larry Schwartz, in the past some students have accepted work for Lydig after graduating.

“Central Washington University is proud of our long partnership with Lydig Construction,” Sathyanarayanan (Sathy) Rajendran, safety and health management program coordinator and chair of the Department of Industrial Engineering Technology, said in a press release.

“The company’s expertise is beneficial to construction management students as they prepare for jobs in the industry,” Rajendran said. “I want to thank Lydig for their generosity, which will help us continue to provide high quality and industry-ready construction management graduates.”

The remaining \$200,000 will be for naming rights to the planetarium in the Science II building, which serves as a classroom and multimedia presentation space. The new title will be The Lydig Construction Planetarium.

This \$200,000 is recognized as a donation for the College of Sciences.

“This landmark naming gift is proof of the company’s commitment to Washington and will allow Central Washington University to further our mission to prepare students to lead enlightened, responsible, and productive lives,” said Tim Englund, dean of the College of Sciences, in a press release.

The College of Sciences will receive the \$200,000 donation in \$20,000 increments over a 10 year period. Englund said that this donation as a whole will go towards matching funds for other donations for the college.

“It’ll be as we go, but I can expect that’ll be the entire gift,” Englund said. “I don’t think we’ll have a problem matching other funds with these funds.”

### In Other News

#### Car Prowlers

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ON THE PROWL



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#### César Chavez Celebration

#### House Truck

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EVERGREEN SCENE



Photo Illustration by Jack Lambert for The Observer  
Cannabis can be infused in many foods including baked goods, candies and even beverages.

Cooking with cannabutter

By Eric Rosane  
Co-Editor

As the marijuana industry continues to expand into states legalizing recreational and medical marijuana, so does the cannabis-infused food and edible market. According to a Arcview Market Research report, over ten percent of California’s cannabis sales were cannabis infused foods and drinks.

Even the marijuana shops in Ellensburg are stepping up their edible inventory.

Besides lighting up, there are multiple ways for customers to get their medicine. Cookies, gummies and chocolates line the corner display case of the Firehouse marijuana dispensary in Ellensburg.

“It also depends on your tolerance and body weight,” Dave Hubbard, an I.D. checker and salesman said regarding potency. “A lot of factors go into it.”

On most packages, 10mg are an indicator of one serving for the product, which is usually one cookie or gummy, according to Hubbard.

Cannabis drink mixers, rimmers and infusers are also offered amongst the products that are growing in the market. Beer companies

might also be diving into this opportunity. A report in USA Today on March 28 detailed Blue Moon’s intentions to release marijuana-infused beers this fall in Denver. There’s no alcohol in these brews though.

Cannabutter and Homemade Cooking Materials

There are a few different ways of cooking marijuana infused foods, according to the Cannabist. Home-

made infused oils, butters and coconut oils are the most common ways to incorporate marijuana into foods. With Cannabis Butters, the process is fairly simple - cook one part butter with one part marijuana, strain and then refrigerate.

There are many different guides and methods to creating cannabis butters and oils, but the process of decarboxylation is found in most recipes. Decarboxylation, according to the Cannabist, is the process of fully activating the THC through a heating method, specifically baking it. This dried product can then be used to make your butter.

After refrigeration, the butters can be used in a variety of unique baking recipes.

“It also depends on your tolerance and body weight.”

-Dave Hubbard, Firehouse Employee

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Observation  
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Welcome back and we hope you enjoyed your Easter.

I say “we” because there are two editor-in-chiefs in the newsroom now: Myself (Natalie Hyland) and Eric Rosane.

We also have an entirely new editorial staff in the newsroom with us, but before we get to the newbies, we’d like to thank the editors who we said goodbye to before break.

Thank you to Sarah Hoot, our former EIC, for all your hard work over the last two years. Thank you to Jack Lambert, our former photo editor, who has graced our pages with his photos for the past two and a half years. Thank you to Daisy Perez, our former scene editor and lede writer extraordinaire. Finally, thank you to Leo Andraca, our graphic designer who made all of our double trucks look better than most of us ever could.

We would also like to welcome in the new staff.

Miles King is our news editor and the only editor here who has written for multiple sections as a reporter. Hanson Lee is our sports editor and was the most enterprising reporter last quarter for the sports section. Henry Crumblish is our scene editor and brings a different kind of energy into the newsroom, keeps us all on our toes.

And we wouldn’t be anywhere without Alexa Murdock, our copy desk chief and orientation editor, Xander Fu, our photo editor, and Mariah Valles, our online and social media editor.

Without each and every one of these people, we wouldn’t be able to put out the paper you’re holding every week on deadline.

This quarter, you can also expect the paper to look a little different. If you haven’t already noticed, our front page isn’t what it was before break. Eric and I, as well as the rest of the staff, spent some time looking over papers from other schools and decided it was time to change it up.

This also may be one of the last times you get to read a letter from the editor. We want to give the paper back to you, the readers. Is something really pissing you off? Are we doing something wrong? Tell us! We want to hear your voices.

The Observer’s motto is By the students, for the students and we want to live up to that this quarter, but we can’t do it without you.

Within the next 10 pages, we hope you find something that interests you, from the article on Troy Thornton, the CWU student who lives in a tiny house truck in news, to Easter in the ‘Burg in scene and the athletic renovations in sports.

Have a great week,

Natalie Hyland  
Co-Editor

“Quote of the Week  
If they want to take some really bad 80s CDs, they’re welcome to it.”

-Captain Dan Hansberry, Ellensburg PD  
Page 7.

**Editorial policy:** The Observer is a public forum for student expression, in which student editors make policy and content decisions. The mission of the Observer is two-fold; to serve Central Washington University as a newspaper and to provide training for students who are seeking a career in journalism. The Observer seeks to provide complete, accurate, dependable information to the campus and community; to provide a public forum for the free debate of issues, ideas and problems facing the community at large, and to be the best source for information, education and entertainment news. As a training program, the Observer is the practical application of the theories and principles of journalism. It teaches students to analyze and communicate information that is vital to the decision making of the community at large. It provides a forum for students to learn the ethics, values, and skills needed to succeed in their chosen career. If you have questions call (509) 963-1073 or e-mail us at cwuobserver@gmail.com



NEWS

EDITOR: MILES KING | news@cwuobserver.com

Dodge-ing housing costs

A CWU student builds a “house-car” as a creative alternate to affordable housing

By Jack Belcher  
Senior News Reporter

The cost of housing can be one of the highest expenses that a college student faces. Many students will try a variety of methods to avoid these costs, from living with roommates to becoming a resident assistant.

Troy Thornton, a senior elementary education major, came up with a solution to this problem.

By modifying an old rotted-out Dodge motorhome, Thornton has created a “house-car,” which he has been living in to cut costs.

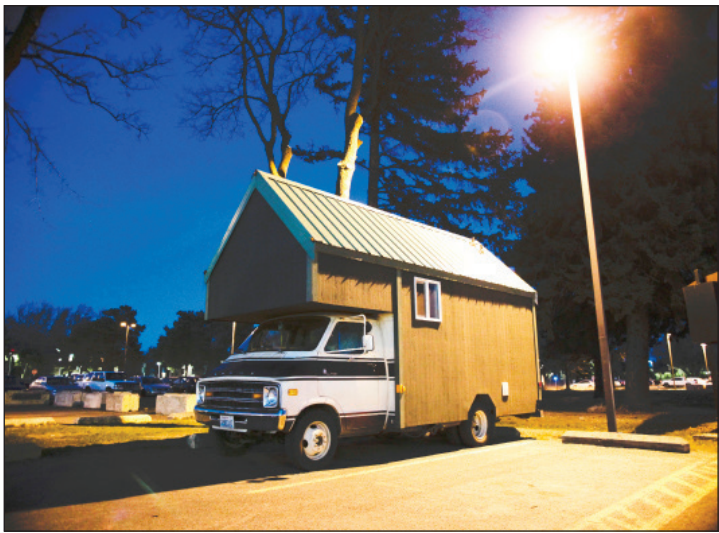
Thornton figured that if he was to rent an apartment, it would cost him around \$900-\$1,200 a month, which was not something he could afford. This left him with two options: build something that he could live in or drop out of college.

With this in mind, he took time off during fall quarter and started building his new home. By winter quarter, the vehicle was finished and Thornton has been living in it ever since.

“I wanted to build it like a conventional house on the back,” Thornton said.

According to Thornton, he has heard only positive reviews from the community, with some people even leaving complimentary letters on his windshield. He decided to start calling the vehicle “house-car,” after hearing the community refer to it as such.

“Everywhere I go, people give me a thumbs up or a wave. Children wave a lot and a lot of times they yell out ‘house-car!’” Thornton said. “People will laugh and smile and wave and



Jack Lambert for The Observer  
Senior Troy Thornton gets around housing costs by way of his custom Dodge truck.

so I feel like I am kinda spreading joy everywhere I go. I like seeing people laugh and smile. I really enjoy that.”

According to Thornton, campus police like the house-car. As long as he parks it on the side of the street overnight he is not breaking any university rules. If he sleeps in it overnight in a university parking lot, it would technically be considered camping on campus property.

When Thornton was in the 8th grade, his parents lost their house due to economic troubles, which left his family living in motels and travel trailers for a couple of months. It was during this time that Thornton came up with the idea of building a house-car.

“I got the idea that the only way I was ever going to be able to afford a home is if I built it myself,” Thornton said.

Thornton then got into construction at a community college, where he fell in love with wood-working. Since then, construction has been a big part of his life.

Thornton is still working on the house-car. He plans to add solar panels over the summer,

which will give him a source of electricity. Adding solar panels to the vehicle will also be of use to him later, as he plans to keep it after he graduates and use it as a solar farm at his real house on his property.

According to Thornton, many people who see him driving it question its height, fuel efficiency and legality.

“It is legal,” Thornton said. “I checked with state patrol before I did it.”

The entire house-car cost less than \$2,500, which Thornton is happy with considering he would be paying much more for an apartment over the course of his remaining time at CWU. He would recommend this way of life to other students because it has been working so well for him.

“Housing is so expensive and it’s getting worse all the time,” Thornton said. “This is a way that people can provide a shelter for themselves who can’t afford to do it the conventional way.”

Tweets From The Streets

Thoughts from our Wildcats

**liz @lizahrens\_ · 8h**  
eburg has given me the best friends ever

7

18

**Reggie @the\_boy\_mace · 9h**  
He's been added to the Watershed list 🍷 im definitely going

3

10

**Kearia Duncan @keezzy\_keeks · 23h**  
- ya girl is one of two CWU dance team captains for 2018-2019 🍷❤️

5

33

**RG @romigillooly · Mar 27**  
My stomach is officially rejecting CWU's surc food

4

21

**JUST JOHN @FineMaltOddball · 23h**  
My Bus.102 professor is getting added to the CWU GOAT list...

13

**Averie @averieej · Mar 29**  
Cwu campus is so beautiful it would be perfect if it wasn't the WINDIEST PLACE ON EARTH

2

9

House-Car Quick Facts:

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Height: 13 feet 2 inches

Paint color: Green to match trees

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NEWS

EDITOR: MILES KING | news@cwuobserver.com

ASCWU Election Central

Meet the Candidates

Brandon Barrett  
Junior

Barrett’s focus is on identifying and solving infrastructure problems around campus. He would like to see a veteran’s wall on campus, similar to those on other college campuses.

Barrett also wants to crack down on the university’s use of leftover Connection Card funds for students by implementing something like a credit system.

“I want to be the voice for the students,” Barrett said.



President



Edith Rojas  
Junior

Rojas is the current Vice President for Academic Affairs. She believes student government should bridge everyone together and represent the students. “You work for the students, not the other way around,” Rojas said. She wants students and government to come together to complete common goals.

“It all comes down to passion,” Rojas said. “I truly care about student’s experiences.”

Kane Lemasters  
Senior

Lemasters believes the executive vice president must have the ability to reach out and engage students. He also stressed the importance of the university using the student’s money effectively.

“I’m an experienced leader and I have what it takes to get the job done,” Lemasters said.



Executive Vice President



Michael Demchuck  
Junior

Demchuck wants to control the budget effectively and work more with the students and administration. He wants to focus on improving student life and believes he is the right person for the job.

Demchuck feels he has the management experience, leadership skills and personality for the position.

Claire-Anne Grepo  
Sophomore

Grepo believes in empowering student voices and making ASCWU more accessible. She would like to see tuition and textbooks become more affordable for students.

Grepo’s focus will be on issues with student parking and retention rates. She would also would like to incorporate other CWU campuses by creating a board of students from all satellite campuses.



Vice President for Academic Affairs



JR Siperly  
Junior

Siperly wants to create a team environment in ASCWU and the Academic Senate. He would like to see more major-required classes offered quarterly to help students graduate faster.

“Students need to know what Academic Senate accomplishes,” Siperly said. He believes the students need someone who can accomplish the goals they want.

Maurice Watkins  
Sophomore

Watkins wants collaboration amongst the Equity and Services Council (ESC) organizations. He would like more events beyond the ESC Block Party, like a study hall. Watkins wants the groups to build stronger bonds and support each other.

Watkins believes ESC groups provide welcome places for students. “How do you expect someone to succeed if they feel like they don’t belong?” Watkins asked.



Vice President for Equity and Community Affairs



Jessica Hernandez  
Sophomore

Hernandez believes ACSWU needs new faces and a change in perspective. She wants to unify and create collaborations among ESC organizations by encouraging organizations to support and attend each other’s events.

Hernandez wants to focus on inclusivity across campus for administration and students. “Success is a yes with Jess,” Hernandez said.

Bailey Kinker  
Junior

Kinker wants to develop student leadership with clubs and organizations. She would like to focus on representing more organization and creating a friendlier environment in the Club Senate.

Kinker’s focus is on getting students recognized, being valued and feeling heard by the student government. She wants clubs and organizations to be inclusive and welcoming to all students.



Vice President for Clubs and Organizations



Stan Southern  
Junior

Southern is the current Vice President for Clubs and Organizations. He wants the position to be more about student engagement. He believes getting students involved on campus heavily influences retention rates.

Southern believes his work rebuilding the clubs and organizations system over his year in the position is valuable.

“This position is hard to learn in a month’s timespan,” Southern said.



Leah Mobley  
Junior

Mobley is running unopposed for Vice President for Legislative Affairs. She is focused on making connections with state legislation and promoting the office and what they do for the students.

“We are a great school and we have potential to be a better school,” Mobley said.

Jocelyn Matheny  
Junior

Matheny is the current Vice President for Student Life and Facilities and is running unopposed. She is focused on ensuring students an incredible experience at CWU while learning and earning a degree.

Matheny’s experience being a resident assistant has helped her familiarize herself with campus and those involved in operations.



Vice President for Legislative Affairs

Public Debates:  
April 4  
April 10

Election Day:  
April 18  
Starting at 8 a.m.

Vice President for Student Life and Facilities



## OPINION

EDITOR: ERIC ROSANE | editor@cwuobserver.com

## New Voices bill: a win for public schools



By  
**Mariah  
Valles**  
Online Editor

It's hard to believe that it's all over. After advocating for students' freedom of the press rights in Washington state for three years, I am happy to say that the New Voices bill became law on March 21.

I joke now and ask myself, "What will I do with my free time?" but the truth of the matter is that I am not stopping here. This experience has molded me into the young journalist I am, and I plan to share my experience with other students from different states who are in the process of passing similar laws. This is definitely a period in my life that I will never forget, and I look forward to sharing it with my students one day when I become a journalism teacher.

Being a vocal student during the process has taught me many valuable lessons:

First, student voices matter. Yes, student voices really do matter. I know it may seem cliché, but it's true. Standing up for what I believe in and sharing my stories and experiences did make a difference.

I will never forget testifying at the state capital during my second

year in high school with fellow journalism members by my side, answering questions from lawmakers and seeing the looks on their faces when they realized how passionate we were (and still are). That gut feeling is one I still don't know how to explain.

Second, trust yourself. Throughout the process, I was asked a lot of really tough "What if?" questions. Some examples include: "What would you do if a staff member wanted to publish ...?" and "What happens if a parent gets angry?" "Why do you believe you have more power than administrators?" and so many more.

When I was asked these tough questions, I would always answer with the following: "We follow an editorial policy. If it doesn't follow that policy, we will not write it," or "I will have to contact the Student Press Law Center (SPLC) on that matter and can give you an answer after I contact them," or my personal favorite, "Whether I am a student journalist or professional journalist, I am still a journalist and deserve to be protected from censorship."

Trust your knowledge and understand that you know what is right from wrong. If you are genuinely curious, ask. The best journalists are constantly asking questions

no matter how much experience they have under their wings.

Third, trust the process. Now I'm not going to lie, when I heard that the bill was tabled at one point, I got discouraged. My adviser suggested that I keep reaching out to representatives and talking to people about the matter. I tried to do everything in my power to make sure that this bill did not die. It meant too much to me to just give up. The next legislative session, I came out stronger than before, with even more knowledge and fierceness than before.

It turns out that being tabled only allowed more time for students, advisers and advocates to spread their voices throughout the state. I learned to be patient, and that being patient would bring great things.

Although I have gotten a large amount of press which is humbling, that is not why I testified. Oftentimes I am asked why I care so much about student press rights because my school, Auburn High School did not enforce a prior review policy. I believe I was able to grow into the strong young journalist I am today due to not working under a censored environment. I'm thankful to have had an adviser who was an advocate of free speech and a principal who stood



Courtesy of Joe Adamack

Senator Joe Fain, a sponsor of the bill, meets with constituents after the signing.

behind true and real journalism.

I testified on behalf of student journalists in Washington state of the past, present and future who deserve to be protected. I testified on behalf of the students who I will one day teach, and have the pleasure of explaining to them just how important their First Amendment rights are.

I often think about the day when I will stand in front of my student journalism staff and explain the fight that so many people in Washington state, including journalism educator Thomas Kaup and retired journalism teacher and longtime free press advocate Fern Valentine, fought endlessly until they

won in 2018.

Who knows where we as a society will be by the time I am teaching, but I know now that this bill is extremely important. Whether you agree with the administration or not, the media is under constant attack. Today's student journalists are tomorrow's professional journalists and I know for a fact that professional journalists do not allow higher-ups to censor them. The profession doesn't stand for it.

It's bittersweet to know that it's all over, but I am eager to help other states pass similar laws, making this a universal reality in America.

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# ON THE

Ellensburg reacts to an abnorm

By Eric Rosane  
Co-Editor

Ellensburg can sometimes be quite the quiet town. For resident Joel Ratcliff, 33, that perception changed the night of Wednesday, March 14.

“My two favorite pastimes are shooting guns and [listening to] rock-n-roll, so I’m a little hard of hearing,” Ratcliff said. “But I swear I heard a woman scream ‘help, help. They’re going to kill me.’”

It was around 9:30 p.m. on a tranquil night on the block of 1900 Trails Edge Drive. Ratcliff had just put his kids to bed and was out on his front porch enjoying a cigarette when he heard the yelling. The screaming sounded like it was coming from a few blocks down.

Assuming it was a domestic dispute that had taken a turn for the worst, Ratcliff called the police.

Around midnight Ratcliff noticed lights coming from outside, panning across the walls of his house. Outside he found a police officer combing the neighborhood; they were looking for a suspect from a burglary.

According to police reports, two juvenile suspects broke into a home on the 1800 block of Bluegrass Avenue with a garage door remote found in one of the resident’s cars. No parties were injured during the break-in.

Stefan Piccone, 43, and his wife caught the prowlers snooping in their kitchen and chased them outside. Piccone pinned one of the suspects down and called for the neighbors to call the police.

“He told me that he was from the westside and that he was homeless. But he had clean clothes on,” Piccone said. “I know when I see homeless.”

The suspects had prowled multiple cars and police recovered stolen items from both the house and cars that linked the suspects to a stream of car prowls.

Ellensburg Police verified in a facebook post on March 29 that both suspects linked to the prowling spree and break-ins were in custody.

Nine other cars had been prowled

that night. That morning, Ratcliff’s neighbors began calling in to the police department. Although he never filed a report with the police, Ratcliff’s car was among those prowled.

“We live on a dead-end street, we didn’t even think that we lived in a high-risk area,” Ratcliff said.

Ratcliff awoke that morning to see his 2007 Subaru Outback’s door ajar. He had left the car unlocked. Eight of the nine cars prowled that night had been left unlocked.

Despite the fuse box, glovebox and center console being ransacked, nothing was taken. On the floor of the car sat a GPS and some high-grade flashlights worth over \$100. These were items that, according to Ratcliff, could have been easy steals. He said that he found it strange that nothing was taken, so he never filed a report with the police.



We always try to promote general safety practices. If you’re leaving your vehicle, don’t leave anything valuable in your vehicle.



-Eric Twaites, assistant chief of CWU PD

Ellensburg saw a high increase in car prowlers during the month of March with over 27 instances of car prowls reported to the Ellensburg Police Department and at least two instances of unreported prowls. March 10 and March 15 saw a majority of the reports, which amounted to over half of the incidents. This was due to a spree of linked prowls that were individually reported.

“We used to preach ‘lock your doors, lock your doors, lock your doors,’” Captain Dan Hansberry of the Ellensburg Police Department said. “But those days of stealing stereos are over.”

According to Hansberry, car prowls are primarily a crime of opportunity, meaning that it’s a convenient, low-risk opportunity for someone to steal something and make a quick buck. He also said that even the sight of old phones and loose change in a cup holder might be enough to persuade someone to prowl. It’s also not unlikely that car prowlers might take advantage of more than one victim by checking multiple cars, which may lead to sprees.

“You can walk through a parking lot, but how many handles do you think you could check before someone sees something going on,” said Eric Twaites, assistant chief of Central Washington University Police.

From Ellensburg Police reports throughout March, the types of items reported stolen varied. In a report dated March 9, a person’s purse was stolen out of an unlocked car the night prior. In a March 10 report, during one notable spree, a victim’s Xbox One was stolen out of the passenger’s side of his car. The victim was in the process of moving and forgot to lock his vehicle.

According to police reports, most car prowls don’t happen at a specific place in Ellensburg. Most reports show that prowls can occur throughout the city, though they don’t happen too often. Most reports show that car prowlers strike during the night, leaving residents to file reports in the morning.

“We always try to promote general safety practices. If you’re leaving your vehicle, don’t leave anything valuable in your vehicle,” Twaites said. Prowlers will likely check under your seats and hidden areas prior to breaking in.

Captain Hansberry uses a different approach than most would. When he knows that he’s going to be out around town or on a hike, he makes an effort to remove all valuables and important items from his car. Even though it’s day, he recognizes that being in a secluded place opens him to the possibility. He then leaves his car unlocked so that prowlers won’t attempt to break a window.

“If they want to take some really bad 80s CDs, they’re welcome to it,” Hansberry said.

## Car Prowler Prevention

### LOCK YOUR DOORS

Make sure every door is locked before leaving your vehicle unattended.

### LEAVE NO TRACE

Remove valuables from your car, including any loose change, old phones or blankets. Don’t stuff belongings underneath seats.

### REPORT SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

If you see behavior that is suspicious, contact the local establishment, inquire with another party or call the police.



# PROWL

Annually high month of car prowls

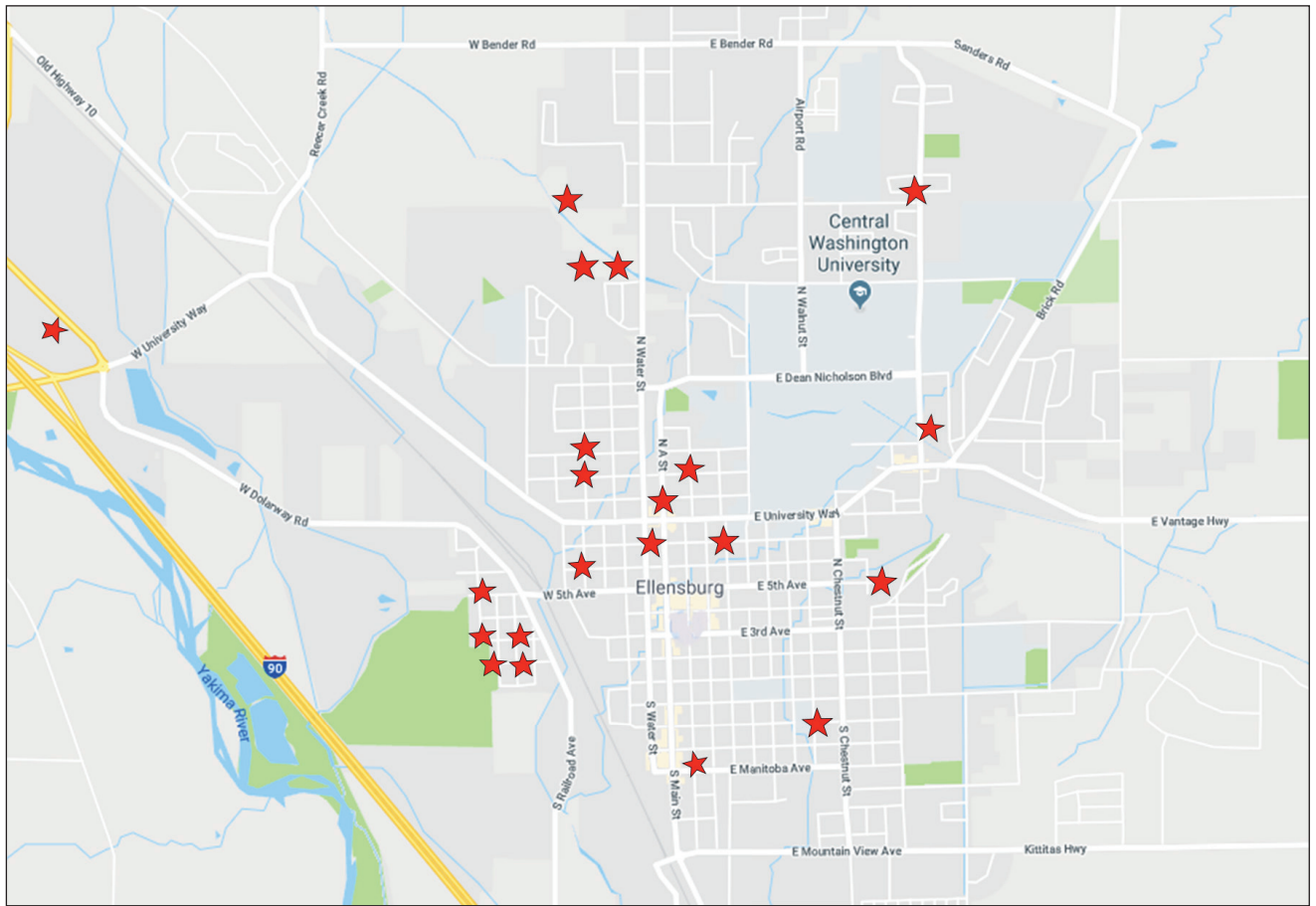
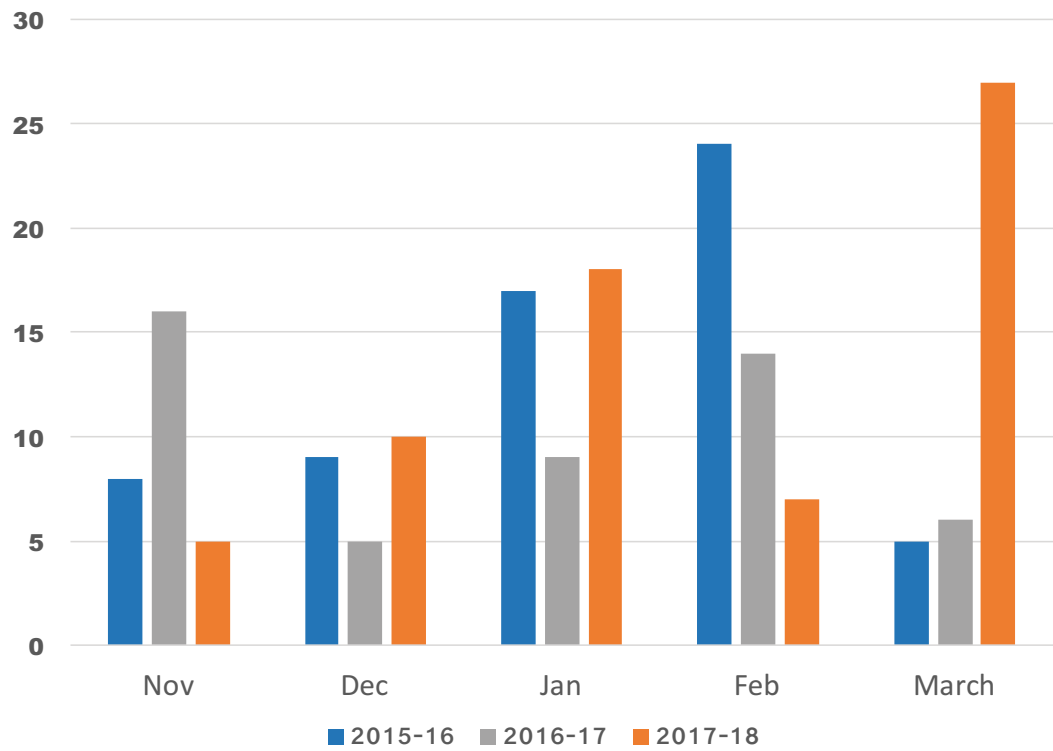


Illustration by Jack Lambert

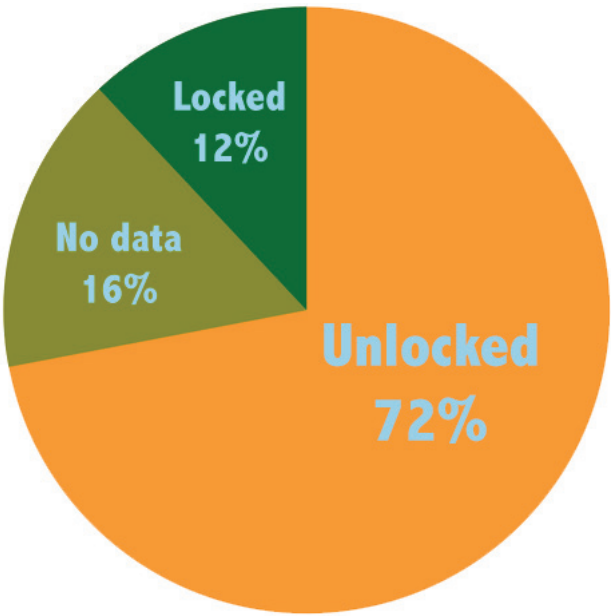
## Locale of the Prowls

Ellensburg experienced 27 reports of car prowls during the month of March. Although no specific portion of the city is targeted most, hotspot and patterns can be recognized from prowling sprees.

Vehicle Prowl Reports Over The Last Three Years



Were vehicles locked during these prowls?



Illustrations by Xander Fu  
Data from Ellensburg Police Reports



Scene

EDITOR: HENRY CRUMBLISH | scene@cwuobserver.com

# CWU celebrates impact of César Chavez

Governor Inslee signs bill to make March 31 César Chavez Day

By Henry Crumblish  
Scene Editor

Jalisco dancers twirled around the SURC Pit, mariachi music permeated throughout the building and the smell of fresh tacos and horchata filled the air. Mexican culture was alive and on display last week.

On Thursday March 29, the Center for Leadership and Community Engagement (CLCE) honored the life and work of César Chavez as part of week-long series of events focused on farm workers called the Semana del Campesino.

On Saturday March 31, Governor Jay Inslee signed House Bill 1939 in Yakima, officially making March 31 César Chavez day in Washington state.

Chavez, who is remembered for his activism work and mobilization of farm workers, has been honored with his own holiday due to the activism and persistence of citizens in the Pacific Northwest.

“Our students on campus are part of a greater community who are making this happen,” Elizabeth Vidaurri, program



Xander Fu/The Observer

Mariachi Del Centro performed in the SURC pit Thursday, March 29.

manager at the CLCE, said.

A farm worker’s simulation took place all week within SURC 135, also known as the César Chavez room, with the intention of educating students on the hardships and struggles that many immigrants and Latinx students face.

At the simulation, students were given the opportunity to dress like farm workers and pick fruit for a paycheck. Attempting to buy groceries on a razor-thin budget while facing language barriers was also included to add as much realism as possible.

Rocks were added to the fruit baskets to simulate weight and

students stooped and hunched over in order scrape strawberries off the SURC floor.

Vidaurri says the CLCE wanted to start something more experiential for students and plans to expand on the simulation next year. “If you’ve never been through it, you can’t relate to it 100 percent,” Vidaurri said.

Jessica Ortega-Mendez, member of the Chavez-King Leadership Institute for Social Change, says it’s important for Wildcats to learn about civil rights issues, including those not popularly covered in textbooks.

Ortega-Mendez, who has picked strawberries in the fields

**\$1000  
tuition waiver**

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**Deadline to apply: May 25**

**Where: SURC 256**

**How: Apply in person**

with her father, knows firsthand how hard and physically demanding life can be for those who find themselves picking fruit for a living.

“A lot of people don’t really understand how tough it is, and we’re getting underpaid for it as well,” Ortega-Mendez said. “A lot of families don’t have immigration status, they’re not legal, they end [up] having to work in these fields.”

Ortega-Mendez says her parents specifically wanted her to work in the fields to instill a sense of gratitude within their child, which is something she carries with her to this day.

The work experience in her formative years motivates her academics at CWU.

“We have this privilege of getting an education so we might as well take it,” Ortega-Mendez said.

Jessica Hernandez of Movi-

miento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán, a junior at CWU, has worked in the fields and warehouses in Washington state. Hernandez wants to bring awareness to exploitation and injustice in the workplace.

“A lot of current issues are happening. There’s a lot of companies still exploiting their workers and underpaying their workers,” Hernandez said. “It’s still an issue that is happening.”

Hernandez believes that exploitation still exists in the workplace for Latinx because of Americans turning a blind eye to controversial subjects like systemic racism.

Many Mexicans and Mexican Americans end up making manual labor jobs careers due to a lack of education and upward mobility.

Hernandez says many of the elderly women in the warehouse she worked would tell her to “Keep going with your education because you don’t want to end up here like I did.”

The Chavez-King Leadership Institute is currently accepting applications from students on campus and offers a \$1000 tuition fee waiver to any students accepted into the program.

# Ready player one: Real danger, virtual reality

OBSERVER REVIEW

By Xander Fu  
Photo Editor

If you have the mental age of nine, as I do, then you’ve probably dreamt of basking in the spectacle of a fisticuff brawl between the Iron Giant and MechaGodzilla. Or maybe what you’ve always wanted is a ludicrous street race that pits Marty’s DeLorean against a 1966 Batmobile in a Robocop’s New York City. If the thought of these check any boxes for you, stop reading right now and head to your nearest theater. You won’t be disappointed.

Ready Player One, Steven Spielberg’s latest film, is set in a fictional not-too-distant future. It is here where we meet Wade Watts, protagonist and our tour guide through this weird new world. He, like many, lives in a shantytown of

stacked trailer homes and poverty. He’s poor, his parents died when he was young, he lives with his aunt and her scumbag boyfriend; the whole world looks grim. “There’s nowhere left to go,” he says. “Nowhere, except the Oasis.”

People use the Oasis, a massive virtual reality online video game, as a refuge from the unfortunate events that constitute their lives. The Oasis consequently carries tremendous significance to its players. When the genius creator of the game passes away, a competition

“Ready Player One really is a gold mine of nerd-dom.”

-Xander Fu, Photo Editor

amongst Oasis players to find a hidden easter egg buried deep within the game erupts. This competition was put in place by

the creator as a final gift to his fans. In true Willy Wonka fashion, the first to find the egg gains full control of the Oasis.

And so it begins: a virtual reality fight to the death for the egg. Watts’ journey is met with opposition from nearly impossible challenges, perplexing riddles and Nolan Sorrento (Ben Mendelsohn).

Sorrento is a megalomaniacal head of a corporate goliath which aims to obtain control of the Oasis so as to squeeze every penny out of the players. He houses and finances an army of elite gamers with the latest and greatest gaming tech to reach the egg first.

We know Ben Mendelsohn from his role as an Imperial Officer in “Star Wars,” and after viewing “Ready Player One,” it is clear to see that Mendelsohn has found his niche. This is the one role he can play like no other: Sci-Fi Dick-

head.

Along his way, Watts finds new friends, personal growth and pop culture references. Lots of pop culture references.

The Oasis seems like a game set in a time both fixated on the pop culture of the 80s and devoid of copyright law. As a result, viewers of the film can sit back and unlock their inner nine-year-old. And I mean fully unlock. The film doesn’t simply flash known logos and favorite characters to get cheap “oh, cool,” out of the audience (though there are quite a few of those as well), it utilizes them in full capacity!

You don’t just see King Kong; you see racers struggling to stay on the roads he seems determined to destroy. The Iron Giant does not appear simply as a big dumb war machine; he lives and does as any true fans of the 1999 animated flick would expect.

My favorite scene in the film involves several characters exploring the Overlook Hotel from



Photo Illustration by Juliane Luna

Kubrick’s “The Shining.” I remember my eyes widening in full as one of the characters stumbles in front of the two red elevator doors. “Oh no! I know what’s next,” I said to myself.

“Ready Player One” really is a gold mine of nerd-dom. But beyond

that, it’s an escape. In time, we are forced to grow up and face the real world. If you long for a time past of youth, simplicity and naiveté, hop aboard the nostalgia train of “Ready Player One” and go.



Scene

EDITOR: HENRY CRUMBLISH | scene@cwuobserver.com

# Springing into a ‘Burg’ Easter



“Easter” from page 1

Szypulski, a graduate student at CWU, takes his dog Harrison to the off-leash park every day and stumbled upon the biscuit hunt by accident. Harrison found one of the golden eggs and won doggy treats and poop bags for Szypulski.

However, the dog biscuit hunt isn’t the only egg hunt at Rotary Park for Easter.

Once the sun sets and the canines gobble up the final bones, residents start preparing for what organizers affectionately call “the fastest event in the history of events.”

Hector says last year they started the flashlight egg hunt at 8:05 p.m. and by 8:30 p.m. she was packed up and pulling out of the parking lot to eat nachos with her family.

The flashlight egg hunt typically lasts five minutes. The children attack the eggs and candy with far more ferocity than the pets of Ellensburg.

The youth of Kittitas tear at the rainbow colored eggs like a pack of piranhas, screams and squeals of joy can be heard ringing out into the night and flashlights flicker in the moonlight.

“Once the air horn blows [the kids are] like a ginormous vacuum cleaner, you can just see them picking up everything,” Hector said.

Approximately 4,000 eggs are placed by organizers and within minutes, every last scrap of chocolate and plastic eggs are snatched up by the youth of Kittitas Valley.

The flashlight egg hunt is divided into three fields for children of different ages. Kids as young as five and as old as 12 can come and enjoy the nighttime fun.

The flashlight egg hunt is free for everyone and is held annually on Fridays to not conflict with other egg hunts and religious activities that take place during the weekend.

For many families, the nighttime Easter celebration has become a tradition. KC Bybee has been attending the flashlight hunt with her family for four years.

Like the Bybee family, many residents look forward to the Flashlight egg hunt all year round. There are similar egg hunts in the valley however, the

Ellensburg hunt is one of the only free and local hunts available to the public

“My daughter loves it,” Bybee said as she watched her loved ones from the sidelines. Bybee’s youngest child still in a stroller and was too young for this year’s hunt, but Bybee affirmed that they’ll be back when her youngest daughter can walk.

The flashlight egg hunt and the dog biscuit hunt are held annually on Good Friday at Rotary Park.



Xander Fu/The Observer

Rotary Parks hosts the dog biscuit hunt ( Top, middle) and the Flashlight egg hunt annually on Good Friday.



# Athletics renovations begin phase one



The Tomlinson Stadium Renovations will feature a synthetic turf field that will be regulation size for the football, soccer and rugby programs at CWU. Digital rendering courtesy of Scott Carlson

## “Remodel” from page 1

The brand new track and field venue will include a non-synthetic turf area for javelin and other throwing events. The expansion will also feature a synthetic turf infield that will be open to club sports, intramurals and recreational activities in addition to the track and field team at CWU.

Scott Carlson, project manager for phase one of the Wildcat Commons Project, said that they are planning on having phase one out to bid by April 10 and are expecting to open bids on May 3.

Carlson said that if the timeline goes as planned, a contract will hopefully awarded by May 23, which will allow for construction to begin after commencement on June 11.

Even though the Tomlinson Stadium renovations and the recreation expansion involve changes to two separate venues, these projects are tied together in terms of construction, but not funding. Carlson said that phase one of the Wildcat Commons Project will be managed under one general contractor.

CWU’s Athletic Director Dennis Francois expects phase one to not only have a positive impact on the athletic program, but to have a positive impact on the university as a whole. Francois said that the renovations being made to Tomlinson Stadium as

well as the recreation expansion will open up the opportunity for CWU to host more sporting events and expose the university to a whole new market of people.

“It’s a win-win all the way around,” Francois said. “It’s a game-changer for our student athletes and their experience here at Central.”

Francois added that the recreation expansion, involving the construction of the brand new track and field venue away from Tomlinson Stadium, has to do with needing to make the football field regulation size for both the soccer and rugby programs at CWU.

The recreation expansion is being funded separately from the Tomlinson Stadium renovations. With a \$6 million budget, two-thirds is being funded by CWU’s SURC Reserves and the other third is being funded by CWU’s Auxiliary Services. Auxiliary Services includes self-supported units on campus such as housing, dining and the Wildcat Shop.

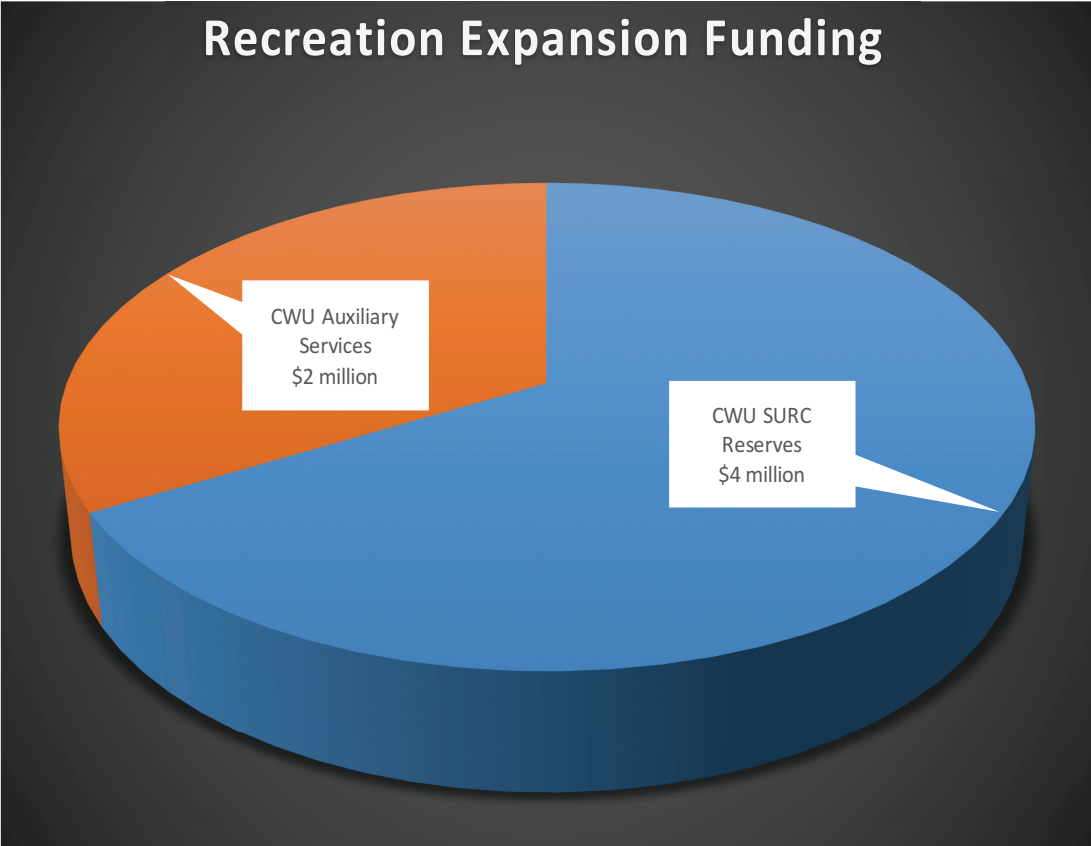
The Tomlinson Stadium portion of the renovations, which is being funded separately from the recreation expansion, is all being fundraised through private donors and boosters by the University Foundation. The Tomlinson Stadium renovations have a budget of \$4.4 million.

Francois said that he anticipates the athletic department to assist in any remaining costs of the Tomlinson Stadium project after the funding has been completed.

With the renovations to Tom-

“It’s a game-changer for our student athletes and their experience here at Central.”

—Dennis Francois, Athletic Director



linson Stadium scheduled for completion on September 14, CWU Football will look to have some of the first action on their brand new turf field when they host Humboldt State the following day in their second home game on Sept. 15.

Football head coach Ian Shoemaker expressed his excitement about the upcoming season and what the new stadium renovations will bring to the football program at CWU.

“The biggest effect that it’s going to have is on the crowd and the environment,” Shoemaker said. “Being able to have night games... guys can get out and do their hunting, hiking, biking, whatever they’re doing and still come to a ball game.”

The addition of LED lights as part of the renovations to Tom-

linson Stadium should have a positive impact on the dynamic of gameday for CWU Football, as it pertains to night games. Shoemaker reiterated that when it comes to hosting night games in Ellensburg, this aspect of the football season won’t just benefit the football program, but it will benefit the student body at CWU as well.

The installation of a brand new artificial turf field is also expected to provide a more durable surface, which should enhance the aspect of playability. Shoemaker said that this is going to be especially applicable in the offseason during the winter time.

“A winter like we had this year with very little snow, we could’ve been on that field training,” Shoemaker said. “The playabil-

ity of the surface is going to be a lot better and I think it’s going to be able to be used a lot more than it was used in the past.”

Another exciting aspect about the Tomlinson Stadium renovations is the effect that the upgraded venue will have on future recruiting classes for CWU’s football program.

With many of the big time college football programs across the country having switched over to turf, Shoemaker emphasized that the incorporation of a turf playing field is vital and should have an impact on future recruiting classes moving forward.

“On the west side of the state, where we recruit most of our kids, the expectation is to have turf,” Shoemaker said. “I think it will be a positive for us in the recruiting process.”



## SPORTS

EDITOR: HANSON LEE | sports@cwuobserver.com

## Irvine finds success close to home

By Natalie Hyland  
Co-Editor

For sophomore All-American pole vaulter Halle Irvine, family has always played a role in her choice to pursue a track and field career. Her mom did long jump and her brother Zane vaulted for CWU.

The younger Irvine started vaulting the summer before her freshman year and has never looked back.

On March 9, Irvine took sixth at the NCAA Indoor Track and Field National Championships with a personal record height of 3.82 meters (12.5 feet).

"Every time you PR or get over a new high bar, it's a really cool feeling coming down knowing that you're gonna make it," Irvine said. "It always keeps you coming back and wanting to get just a little bit more."

Irvine was one of four Wildcats to earn All-American status at the meet. Kodiak Landis, Ali Anderson and HarLee Ortega also placed in the top eight in their respective events.

Irvine says that even though she made nationals, she didn't have very high expectations for

the meet.

"I was literally the last person to get in [for vault]," Irvine said. "I was just trying to go in and do my best."

After she cleared 3.82 meters, she missed her three attempts at the next height and was left waiting for her competitors to either make it or break it.

Less than half an hour later, she was named an All-American.

In the gym, Irvine practices three times a week with her vault coach James "JT" Statler to work on strength training and technique.

"There's a lot of technique work. You have to be able to run with the pole, you have to be able to plant the pole," Irvine said. "Being able to swing and get on top of the pole takes a lot of different muscle groups and strengths."

Unlike most college athletes, Irvine has worked with her

coach since high school. Statler is from Yakima and works with high schoolers in the area, including those at Irvine's old high school, twice a week.

"I have high expectations for everyone," Statler said. "[Halle] did



Xander Fu/The Observer

Sophomore Halle Irvine practices pole vault in the fieldhouse. She aims to break records going into the latter part of the season.

**I was doing rings and ropes and there were days I couldn't hold onto anything...**

**Halle Irvine, Pole Vaulter**

a lot of work this summer and I kind of expected [her to do well]."

During the summer, Irvine worked out with Statler a few times a week. She said when working out with him, there were times she was sore the next day.

"I was doing rings and ropes and there were days I couldn't hold onto anything [because] my hands hurt so bad," Irvine said. "It [was] definitely a lot of hard work getting to the point I'm at, but I think it was worth it."

Irvine's teammate Kayla Wy-

att, a freshman, echoed the sentiment, calling her "very determined to achieve her goals" and "inspiring to watch."

"She's very passionate [and] her work ethic definitely shows that," Wyatt said. "She puts in a lot of work in practice and outside of practice."

Wyatt first met Irvine when she visited CWU on a recruiting visit and connected with her instantly.

"She's the only one who really talked to me and she answered all my questions," Wyatt said.

The two are the only female

vaulters for CWU this year, after senior and school record holder McKenna Emmert graduated last June.

"One [girl] left and another one came in," Statler said. "[Irvine] at least got to spend the year with a senior. She saw how the leadership role was done and how practice should be."

Looking ahead, Irvine has set her sights on outdoor nationals and breaking the school and GNAC women's vaulting records.

"I think I still have a lot more left in me," Irvine said.

## Softball hits the ground running

By Hanson Lee  
Sports Editor

The Wildcats put together an impressive start to the season and have been able to stay strong up until this point. With an Overall record of 21-8 and a conference record of 9-3, the Wildcats are currently sitting at first place in the GNAC conference. The season started early February.

"We're playing some great softball right now," said Michael Larabee, head coach of the softball team.

Larabee praised the team's ability to deliver at the mound as well as at the plate.

"I'm especially happy with our pitching," Larabee said. "With the way we swing the bats, we're gonna have a real chance at being real successful."

As far as records, the Wildcats are finding themselves in a similar position to where they found themselves at this time last season. Larabee emphasized the importance of having a winning attitude and explained that in comparison to last season, the Wildcats have drastically improved their mindset this season.

"What we're focusing on right now is trying to come out and learn and grow and get better each day," Larabee said. "I'm really proud of our team, they've really been able to do that this year."

The Wildcats kicked off their season by traveling to Montana for the MSUB Desert Stinger where they were able win three out of their first five games of the season.

Following those wins, the Wildcats went on to win 11 out of their next 14 games which included an impressive nine game winning streak.

Sophomore Savannah Egbert has led the offensive charge for the team this season. In 29 games for the Wildcats, Egbert has strung together 46 hits in 97 at-bats for an impressive .474 batting average.

"We've been practicing a lot," Egbert said. "We're just excited to get out on the field and play games."

In her second year as a Wildcat Egbert has not only excelled at the plate but has also stepped into a higher role this season- batting leadoff for the Wildcats.

Freshman Lexie Strasser has stepped into a key role for the Wildcats this season. She currently leads the way at the starting pitcher position. The freshman standout has been able to up big for the Wildcats this season, already putting together a 12-5 record backed behind an impressive 2.26 ERA.

The Wildcats recently came out of the Tournament of Champions where they gave a strong showing, winning nine out of their 10 games.

"We played really good games," Egbert said. "It was great competition for us to see how the GNAC does versus everybody else."

Strasser was able to string together a strong showing in the tournament, going 4-1 over the course of the week with an ERA of 0.28.

Strasser was named to the 2018 Tournament of Champions All-Tournament Team alongside her teammate Taelor Griffin for her performance on the mound in the tournament.

"It was exciting," Strasser said. "Everyone's really supportive... there's a lot of good team chemistry."

Last year, the Wildcats made it to the

GNAC tournament with a record of 33-13, but ended up falling twice in their first three games to start the tournament.

"All of us want to be GNAC champs," Egbert said. "We want to keep going with our streak. We want to position ourselves in that regional position."

Egbert brought up the team's mantra which has helped everybody maintain a winning mindset so far this season.

"Chasing perfection, catching excellence," Egbert said. "We know we can't be perfect, it's a game of failure, but if we strive for that, we're gonna catch excellence along the way."

With the Wildcats excelling on the offensive end as well as on the mound, the team

has also been able to put a lot of focus towards solidifying their defense, an aspect of this year's team that hasn't gone unnoticed.

"We've got a great formula right now," Larabee said. "We've got a great culture going on... When you add talent, you add our preparation, that's an awful tough combination to beat."

With a good portion of the season still left to play, the Wildcats are looking forward to continuing their success on the field in hopes of making a run in the GNAC tournament.

"We need to keep doing what we're doing right now," Larabee said. "You take things day by day and I think we'll be in a good spot."

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SPORTS

EDITOR: HANSON LEE | sports@cwuobserver.com

Softball ready for Western rivalry game

By Hanson Lee  
Sports Editor

Coming off a doubleheader sweep against Concordia last weekend, the Wildcats are looking to host a rivalry matchup against Western Washington University (WWU) on Saturday, April 7. With an overall record of 21-8, and a conference record of 9-3, the Wildcats are preparing for what will be their first meeting with WWU this season.

“It doesn’t matter who we play,” head coach Michael Larabee said. “We want to come out and play our game and let them worry about shutting us down.”

With their winning record, the Wildcats are currently sitting atop the GNAC while WWU sits at seventh with an overall record of 11-23 and a conference record of 5-10.

In preparation, Larabee made his expectations clear and said that the Wildcats are making improvements on the defensive end while also working to stay sharp offensively.

“Continuing to tighten up our defense... That’s been a little bit of our Achilles’ heel,” Larabee said. “A high level of catch is the foundation of a great defense.”

Senior catcher Jacie McDaniels has played a critical role towards the success of the Wildcats so far



Xander Fu/The Observer

Taelor Griffin passes the ball to first base in an attempt to out Western Oregon University in the top of the fourth inning.

this season. In 27 games on the offensive end, McDaniels has accumulated 25 hits in 87 at-bats for a batting average of .305 and has been able to amass a team-leading 21 RBIs so far this season.

“I expect us to do well and I expect us to leave it on the field,” McDaniels said. “Being a senior, [I’m] really trying to get everybody going and enjoy it.”

McDaniels has been able to bring herself into a leadership role this season for the Wildcats. Mc-

Daniels emphasized her motivation to lead by example in preparation for the team’s upcoming rivalry game against WWU.

“I feel like people look up to us,” McDaniels said. “With my other seniors, people have such high expectations that we try to keep it going and keep everybody motivated.”

In order for the team to be successful come Saturday, it’s critical that the team stays focused and doesn’t worry about their overall

record, according to McDaniels.

We need to “keep on going out there like we’re 0-0 right now,” McDaniels said.

Fellow senior outfielder Celine Fowler has also been a key contributor for the Wildcats this season. In 28 games, Fowler has been able to find her share of success at the plate alongside McDaniels, stringing together 26 hits in 90 at-bats for a .289 batting average.

“We are preparing like we do

every other weekend,” Fowler said. “I think we all go in there playing more relaxed and being ready for the outcome that’s going to happen and pushing ourselves to be the best that we can.”

Fowler has also been able to implement herself into a leadership role for the Wildcats this year. According to her, it’s always been about passing on the torch and setting the right example for her younger teammates that are going to be the future of the softball program.

“I always try to be the loudest on the field and I always try to keep the energy up and be encouraging to my teammates,” Fowler said. “I want my teammates to feel loved by the seniors and I want them to be ready to be leaders when they’re older.”

In what will surely be a competitive atmosphere this Saturday when WWU comes to town, there’s always a certain amount of pride that comes with playing against your biggest rival. For the Wildcats, it’s all about sticking to their strengths and not letting anything get in the way of what they do best.

“It’s always nice to beat your arch rival,” Larabee said. “We’ve got a system in place [and] we’ve got talent... There’s nothing special we have to do except keep doing what we’re doing.”

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START CHALLENGING YOURSELF.  
START BUILDING CONFIDENCE.  
START RAISING THE BAR.  
START DEVELOPING SKILLS.  
START TAKING ON CHALLENGES.  
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